

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Official Action dated November 9, 2005. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 2-5 and 8-13 are under consideration in this application. Claims 1, 6-7 and 14-16 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 2 and 4-5 are being amended, as set forth in the above marked-up presentation of the claim amendments, in order to more particularly define and distinctly claim applicants' invention.

The claims are being amended to correct formal errors and/or to better recite or describe the features of the present invention as claimed. All the amendments to the claims are supported by the specification. Applicants hereby submit that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2-5 and 8-13 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As claims 2 and 4-5 are being rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of their base claim(s) and any intervening claims, while claims 3 and 8-13 depend from claim 2, all these claims are in condition for allowance.

Prior Art Rejection

Claims 1, 6-7 and 14-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2003/0187847 to Lubbers et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,912,588 to Jardin et al.

As Claims 1, 6-7 and 14-16 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, the rejection thus becomes moot.

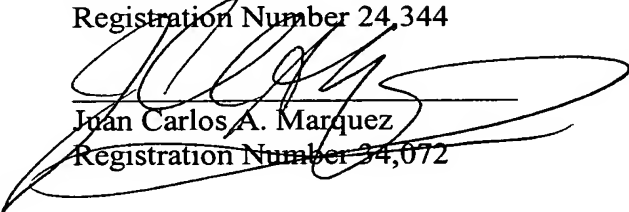
Conclusion

In view of all the above, clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention and the prior art references upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely, Applicant respectfully contends that the prior art references cannot anticipate the present invention or render the present invention obvious. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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